PHILATELY
BY A LADY COLLECTOR.

“Mighty things from small beginnings grow.” – Dryden.
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I have noticed with must interest the rapid growth of Philately in America, and I cannot but congratulate my confreres on the appearance of the present work, supplying as it doubtless will, the vacancy of a thorough and reliable magazine; I bespeak for it a warm reception by the Philatelic world. I shall take great pleasure in contributing to its columns, such information as I may have gathered from several year’s experience in “Stamp Collecting,” apart from the fascination it creates. Philately is acknowledged to be one of the most profitable pastimes of the age. The location of countries, the laws that govern them, and man other important facts are thus obtained in much less time than that usually devoted to the study of geography and history.

Enough praise cannot be bestowed upon such a science, for a science it unquestionably is. But more, anon! The entire subject has been so thoroughly treated by able European writers, that my remarks can be but feeble repetitions of their ideas.

I shall therefore confine my notes to the general rules of collecting; giving my views of the “aggravated album” question and of the manner of mounting stamps. Owing to the number and variety of albums in circulation, I will not attempt to select any particular one; but leave the decision entirely to the taste of the party collecting. For a beginner, however, I would strongly recommend the following plan which I think a good one:

Having obtained a reliable catalogue, (which shall contain the description of all known specimens to date), let us proceed to number the stamps, proofs, essays, varieties, envelopes, etc., from 1 upwards.

This classification will allow the collector the choice of accepting or rejecting any specimen he may please, the next and perhaps the most important point of all consists in the selection of a proper album. A blank-book of the usual dimensions, containing about one hundred leaves, and a sufficient quantity of guards, will accommodate an ordinary collection; which may be arranged according to one of the following systems: Chronological, Geographical or Alphabetical. Of the three, I am strongly in favor of the latter one, and chiefly so, since our catalogues usually comply with that order; but, leaving the adjustment of this matter to the collector’s choice, let us proceed to number the leaves of our Album. I think as a general rule, each country which will require several leaves, and in other cases two or more countries can be placed together without the slightest inconvenience; but this division can be easily regulated, care being taken to have the figures of the Album correspond with those of the catalogue.

Although embellishments are of no particular advantage to the appearance of the collection, et, if the amateur be at all skilful as a draftsman, he may empanel his pages, which will add perhaps a little of the contour of his stamps.

Our previous requirements met, let us briefly consider the method of mounting our specimens.
The idea is so clearly conveyed by the accompanying sketch, that the words seem almost useless. The heavy lines in the cut represent the surface or portion of the stamp to covered with gum; a strong solution of gum-arabic will meet every practical purpose and it may be applied with a medium sized paint brush. The following rule (if strictly complied with), is sufficient to affix the rarest stamp, and will admit of an easy removal when required.

Trusting that my efforts may prove acceptable, I will bring the subject of Philately to a rest for the present.